**Q: why did new coke fail despite of market research?**

**New Coke:**

In 1985, Coca-Cola changed its formula and introduced new coke to compete in market since it was losing market shares to Pepsi and the [new coke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Coke) turned out as a disaster despite of the fact the company had had its thorough research. The question is what went wrong? How could such renowned company can fall prey to not only massive loss but also public protests, lawsuits and formation of organization to bring back the old coke? [[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Coke#Backlash)  
There could be number of reasons and I will analyze them in following context:

**Taste Tests:**

There were 200,000 taste tests conducted and 30,000 on the final formula and 60% preferred new coke over old and shockingly when it was in market people disliked it, hated it and they backlashed. The problem I see here is not about the number of taste tests they did or place where they did it. The drawback of taste tests or blind test is that they only offer a sip and I would call it a ridicule to actually consider one sip for whole market. For example I buy a juice I like its first sip or second or even third but there is no guarantee that my taste buds will cooperate till the last drop it. It was not marketing blunder but it turned out a psychological one as well, for instance one might like to taste something different out in a restaurant or at formal events but the case is a lot different when a person has a choice to buy for himself and there is possibility he chose Pepsi and bought cans for home as well.

**New Packaging-New Feelings:**

Believe it or not we have the nature to judge everything by its cover. The taste wasn’t as bad as everyone said so because apparently it was more like Pepsi, to be sweet but we cannot ignore the fact that the new packaging also played role in this undesired result of new coke. According to [Louis Cheskin’s](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Cheskin) color psychology in marketing, consumers react to the drink’s packaging unconsciously and hence taste differently. So when consumers tasted new coke, it is possible they also tasted the new can and new script and reacted to both. The new packaging was a possible factor to lose customers.

**Emotional Attachment:**

For almost hundred years the company had one formula which was ruling the world of beverages and hundred years is a lot to get attached to. People didn’t just like the taste of it, but also they had a habit of drinking coke, they had been drinking that since childhood and as one the protestor said, “ our children will never know refreshment”, it was kind of attachment that they wanted to go onto future generations as well. Another person told the paper that,” So much of my life is changing outside of my control, Coke, the one thing left from my childhood, has been changed.”

Research showed that people drank coke as a part of their identification and they wanted to be loyal to it and expected company to do the same but new coke couldn’t reach the bar and failed.

**Choice or Option? :**

When blind taste tests were done, they forgot to mention to the consumers that the new coke will replace old coke, it won’t be side by side in shelf to old coke. I believe that would have different impact on results. The tests didn’t show the bond people had with Coca-Cola and since the company took away their choice, the public infuriated. One person during protest said that “They have taken away my freedom of choice, it’s un-American!” We can conclude that people were not only angry at new formula but also the fact that their choice was being taken away from them.

**Reference Links:**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Coke>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Coke#Backlash>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Cheskin>

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